



United States Department of Agriculture  
Marketing and Regulatory Programs  
Agricultural Marketing Service  
Livestock and Seed Program

MGC Instruction 638  
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Meat Grading & Certification Branch

## **Process Control Certification Program**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Instruction is to set forth policies and procedures for the certification of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) donated red meats under the Process Control Certification Program (PCCP).

### **POLICIES**

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) regulations (CFR 7, Part 250, Section 30) require that all processing of donated meat products be performed by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) certification service in plants operating under Federal Inspection (or State equivalent). Additionally, the Meat Grading and Certification (MGC) Branch policy is to ensure USDA donated product is properly handled, processed according to specification, and traceable from school district to raw product supplier.

### **SCOPE**

The PCCP offers further processors an alternative to traditional USDA certification. This program is intended to add value to further processed donated red meat commodities through audit based process control. The PCCP emblem may be used in advertising and promotional literature for finished goods distributed to States or State school systems, as well as commercial products produced with AMS grader certification.

### **SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

Prospective processors are required to submit a written proposal annually, prior to the commencement of production for each production year, addressing each requirement area and outlining specific procedures used to ensure that these requirements are met while processing products under the PCCP. Processors shall submit proposals to:

Director of Grading and Certification  
USDA, AMS, LS, MGC Branch  
13952 Denver West Parkway  
Building 53, Suite 350  
Golden, CO 80401-9978

Each processor shall submit one copy in hard copy form and one additional copy on a compact disk in either Microsoft Office Word format or Portable Document Format (PDF). The Director of Grading and Certification and the Processing Review Team shall review proposals for compliance with this Instruction, notify processors of proposal status within 20 working days of receipt, schedule and conduct in-plant reviews, and issue a written letter indicating PCCP approval or denial.

## **AMENDMENTS TO PROGRAMS**

Amendments to approved PCCP's shall be submitted to the Director of Grading and Certification for review and approval, **prior to implementation**. The Director of Grading and Certification or designee shall notify processors of amendment status within 10 working days of receipt and shall issue a written letter to the further processor indicating amendment approval or denial.

## **WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS**

The number of AMS agents assigned to monitor the PCCP shall equal one AMS agent to no more than two production lines. Any deviations in this requirement shall be determined through evaluation of the further processor's facilities and production schedule by the appropriate MGC Branch Supervisors.

## **DEFINITIONS**

<b>Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)</b>	The USDA agency responsible for purchasing surplus commodities such as meat, poultry, fruits and vegetables. AMS also provides end product certification that, at minimum, certifies against non-diversion and non-substitution and provides for metal detection of donated food.
<b>Backhaul</b>	Commodities that are physically picked up from a distributing agency (DA) or recipient agency (RA) for processing.
<b>Batching</b>	The process of combining the same kind of non-substitutable donated food from more than one State RA during a production run. Batching between States/RA's may only be done with written concurrence of each State/RA prior to processing. <b>Batching is only permitted with diverted raw material, not backhauled product.</b>
<b>Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program</b>	A voluntary program administered by FNS that evaluates formulations to determine the contribution toward the meal pattern requirements. It also protects the school from exaggerated product claims and provides a warranty against audit claims, if used according to manufacturer's directions.
<b>Commercial Equivalent</b>	End product that is made using commercial meat which is equal to or better than the USDA commodities.

<b>Commingling</b>	The act of storing, combining, or blending commercial food and substitutable donated food together into a single inventory at a processor's plant. Processors must receive approval from FNS to commingle foods on a national level. <b>Commingling is only permitted with diverted raw material, not backhauled product.</b>
<b>Corrective Action</b>	Action to eliminate the cause of a detected nonconformity or other undesirable situation.
<b>Distributing Agency (DA)</b>	The agency, usually an agency of State government, which enters into an agreement with FNS for the distribution of donated food to eligible recipient agencies.
<b>Diverted Product</b>	Commodities that are sent directly to the processor by the USDA.
<b>Donated Food Processing Agreement (DFPA)</b>	A contract between the distributing agency and the further processor to produce a finished product.
<b>End Product</b>	A finished product containing any amount of donated foods that have been commercially processed.
<b>End Product Data Schedule (EPDS)</b>	A standard form that describes the finished end product being produced. Information detailed on this form includes formulation, quantity of donated food needed to produce a specific number of units of end product, and pricing, packaging and yield information.
<b>First In First Out (FIFO)</b>	An inventory control system based on the date of delivery from USDA to the processors designated delivery point. Or for finished product, an inventory control system based the date of production.
<b>Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)</b>	The agency responsible for administering domestic food assistance programs.
<b>Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)</b>	The USDA agency whose primary mission is to inspect the wholesomeness of meat and poultry products.
<b>Monitor</b>	The AMS agent shall observe designated processor's employee perform and document the specific task as required by the PCCP.
<b>Non-conformance (NC)</b>	A deviation from program requirements.

<b>PCCP</b>	Process Control Certification Program.
<b>Recipient Agency (RA)</b>	Any organizations within a State eligible to receive USDA donated foods.
<b>Rework</b>	Wholesome, salvageable product generated during a production run that is not acceptable as the specified product. Product such as broken patties or nuggets, or other defects such as missing breading, lumps, and ridges would be classified as rework product.
<b>Substitution</b>	The act of replacing USDA donated commodities with commercially purchased materials of the same generic identity, and of equal or better quality to the donated food provided by USDA.
<b>Verify</b>	The AMS agent shall review processor's documentation to determine if the specific examination was performed, accurately documented and within the specified tolerances as required by the PCCP.

More definitions are available from the [State Processing Program Handbook](#).

## **I. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS – FURTHER PROCESSORS**

### **A. General Requirements**

Further Processors shall:

1. Operate under an FNS approved substitution agreement.
2. Develop and maintain individual programs that address each requirement area outlined in the PCCP. Programs, at a minimum, shall include requirements specified in this Instruction. Further processors may include additional programs and requirements not listed in this program, which may be monitored and verified by AMS agents.
3. Provide AMS agents copies of applicable DFPA and EPDS, including applicable amendments, addendums, waivers, contact information (name, title, phone numbers, etc.) for all processing areas and any other programs used in conjunction with the PCCP.

### **B. Donated Foods Processing Agreements (DFPA)**

Further processors shall:

1. Secure contracts with the State DA.

2. Ensure that all contracts (including EPDS) are signed and dated by representatives of the State DA and further processor.

**C. Traceability**

Further processors shall:

1. Develop and maintain a traceability program, capable of tracking product from raw product supplier to end item recipient and vice versa on a per case basis. Although electronic programs (those using bar coding and scanning devices) are preferred, manually operated programs are acceptable.
2. Identify donated food clearly, through all stages of production, storage and shipment.
3. Ensure that the information contained on the State Monthly Performance Report (MPR) is traceable to production records, per product.

**D. Equipment**

Scales:

Further processors shall:

1. Develop and maintain a scale calibration program that is certified by State or local government officials or an equivalently registered or licensed technician.
2. Ensure that scales are calibrated in accordance with the National Institute of Standards and Technology, Handbook 44.
3. Ensure that scales are calibrated daily prior to the start of production.
4. Ensure that a licensed technician calibrates, initials and dates scales monthly.
5. Maintain copies of licenses or certificates of all in-house technicians and a scale calibration log for review by AMS agents.

Grinders & Blenders:

Further processors shall:

1. Ensure that the grinding and blending systems are free of non-program materials (i.e. uncertified commercial meat).
2. Perform a complete “clean-up” prior to re-introducing program materials for certification in the PCCP, if non-program materials are

introduced into grinders or any other equipment used in the processing of products for the PCCP.

Extruder/Elimination Systems:

Further processors shall:

1. Ensure that extruder/elimination systems are attached to grinder heads and function in accordance with manufacturer specifications. Manufacturer specifications shall be available to AMS agents upon request.
2. Ensure that all extruded material is clearly identified and disposed of properly.

Thermometers:

Further processors shall:

1. Ensure that thermometers are calibrated daily prior to the start of production.
2. Maintain thermometer calibration logs for review by AMS agents.

Metal Detectors:

Further processors shall:

1. Ensure that finished product passes through a functioning, in-line metal detector prior to initial placement into shipping containers.
2. Ensure that metal detectors are calibrated in accordance with manufacturer specifications.
3. Ensure that metal detectors are capable of detecting stainless steel, ferrous and non-ferrous metals.
4. Declare the type of equipment, location, detection procedure, sensitivity levels, frequency of validating the equipment, and demonstrate how the product with metal contamination is excluded from complying product.

**E. Raw Materials**

Further processors shall:

1. Provide the AMS grader with a COA (Certificate of Analysis) prior to the use of Fresh Boneless Beef (combos) for further processing. Processors should assure their suppliers fax the COA to arrive at

delivery. A COA is not required for frozen coarse ground beef as the microbiological analysis is known before shipment.

2. Conduct a product examination at the time of processing. The examination shall include, at a minimum, the following requirements:
  - a. Condition - Product must not show any evidence of mishandling, such as defrosting and refreezing, excessive purge, sticky surface slime, freezer burn, odor and/or discoloration.
  - b. Age - Beef and pork product with production dates up to 12 months old may be processed. Product exceeding the age limit will be considered non-substitutable and may only be processed under the provisions of MGC Instruction 640.
  - c. Damaged Cases - Cases with exposed product shall be identified and reviewed by the quality control personnel and the AMS agent. If both parties agree that acceptable product may be recovered from the damaged case(s), then reconditioning is permissible.
  - d. Continuous Process - Every effort shall be made to complete the processing of product from raw state to finished cases in continuous production. Processors may carry over product as long as the following requirements are met:
    1. Product is held in clean containers. (Containers that have been washed and are free of any non-program materials.)
    2. Containers are properly identified in accordance to the traceability program.
    3. Product is held no longer than 72 hours.
    4. Product temperatures do not exceed 40°F.
    5. Product is processed prior to newly ground/formulated product of the same item.
    6. Exceptions for equipment failure will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
3. Record the weight of raw materials received on the State MPR.
4. Record the weight and number of raw cases used for each production run per item on the State MPR.
5. Process diverted meat on a FIFO basis.

6. Ensure that all backhaul commodities are isolated, run separately from diverted commodities, and are identified with a specific backhaul code and State RA specific designation.

**F. Formulation**

Further processors shall:

1. Ensure that all products are formulated in accordance with the appropriate EPDS.
2. Ensure that all ingredients are identified and recorded on each formulation sheet per product per batch.
3. Ensure that water is formulated by weight rather than by volume.

**G. Batter/Breading**

Further processors shall:

1. Conduct batter/breading/glazing percentage examinations in accordance with the appropriate product specification.
2. Ensure that batter/breading/glazing percentage is within tolerances stated in DFPA and/or the CN labeling quality control plan.

**H. Product Temperature**

Further processors shall develop and maintain programs that address the following stages of production.

1. Ensure that raw (preprocessed, ground and formulated) product does not exceed 40°F.
2. Ensure that cooked products meet the appropriate temperature as indicated in appropriate product specification.
3. Ensure that frozen product meets appropriate contract and product specifications.

**A. Portion Weights**

Further processors shall ensure that portion weights meet the minimum requirements specified on the appropriate EPDS.

**B. Portion Counts**

Further processors shall ensure that portion counts meet the minimum requirements specified on the appropriate EPDS.



### C. **Product Defects**

Further processors shall conduct product defect examinations in accordance with the appropriate product specification.

### D. **Case Net Weights**

Further processors shall ensure that marked case net weights on the container label meet the minimum requirements specified on the appropriate EPDS.

### E. **Packaging & Labeling**

Further processors shall:

1. Ensure that product is identified in accordance with traceability program.
2. Ensure that product is packaged in accordance with the appropriate EPDS.
3. Ensure that the label is legible, contains the PCCP emblem and is located on the front panel.
4. Ensure that the PCCP emblem measures at least 1 inch wide by  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch high.
5. Ensure that the labels are placed on the face panel. They must contain, at a minimum, the production date, product name, product code, case net weight, donated commodity statement, "**Contains Commodities Donated by the USDA,**" and "**This Product Shall Be Sold Only to Eligible Recipient Agencies.**"

### F. **Production Records**

Further processors shall:

1. Provide AMS agents with a daily production schedule prior to start up.
2. Ensure that AMS agents are notified in advance of any production schedule changes.
3. Record the weight and number of raw cases used to produce each product.
4. Record the weight and number of finished cases produced per product.
5. Record the weight of rework generated per product.

6. Record the weight of rework used per product (rework generated and re-introduced during the same production run shall not be recorded).
7. Record the weight of loss from other than normal production loss.

#### **G. Rework**

Further processors shall:

1. Label rework in accordance with traceability program.
2. Process rework in accordance with appropriate specifications.
3. Process rework within three (3) months of production.

#### **H. Storage/Shipment**

Further processors shall:

1. Ensure product maintains temperature in accordance with product and/or contract specifications.
2. Store and ship product using the FIFO principle.

#### **I. Meetings**

Further Processors shall:

1. Schedule and participate in PCCP meetings, a minimum of one time each month.
2. Discuss program developments, proposed amendments, etc.
3. Record meeting minutes and provide copies to AMS agent(s).

### **II. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS – AMS AGENTS**

#### **A. General Requirements**

AMS agents shall:

1. Familiarize themselves with all programs, contracts (inclusive of EPDS), product specifications, amendments and waivers used in the PCCP.
2. Maintain copies of all programs, contracts (inclusive of EPDS), amendments and waivers used in the PCCP.
3. Monitor each PCCP requirement a minimum of one time per shift.

4. Verify each PCCP requirement according to the requirements set forth on PCCP Form 1. Please note that these are minimum requirements and that an AMS agent may conduct more frequent verifications, as deemed necessary.

## **B. Production Records**

AMS agents shall:

1. Organize the following records in binders for each product:
  - a. EPDS.
  - b. Written waivers.
2. Organize completed copies of the following in a secure file/folder:
  - a. Commodity Further Processing Worksheet, Front and Back.
  - b. MGC-44 USDA Donated Meat Product Production Information.
  - c. PCCP Form 1, Certification Checklist.
  - d. PCCP Form 2, Non-conformance Report.
  - e. Further Processor Responses to PCCP Form 2.

## **C. Meetings**

AMS agents shall:

1. Attend PCCP meetings.
2. Discuss program developments, proposed amendments, etc.
3. Forward copies of meeting minutes to USDA, PCCP Coordinator.

# **III. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS - NON-CONFORMANCES**

## **A. Non-conformances**

AMS agents shall:

1. Issue NC's for program deviations and/or deficiencies.
2. Require a written response to each NC within 72 hours of receipt of NC. The response shall include action taken to correct as well as prevent reoccurrences.

3. Forward copies of NC and responses to the MGC Branch Office of Field Operations for evaluation.

## **B. Penalties**

Further Processors that:

1. Fail to provide AMS agents with a written response to a NC within three production days of occurrence, shall cause MGC Branch to initiate 100 percent monitoring of the PCCP.
2. Receive three NC's in the same program area (traceability, metal detection, etc.), over a 30 day period, may cause 100 percent monitoring of the affected areas within the PCCP for up to two (2) weeks.
3. Receive five NC's throughout the entire PCCP, over a 30 day period, may cause suspension of PCCP for a minimum of 30 days.

## **C. Suspension**

Further processors that fail to address or take corrective action on a NC and/or have systematic problems with their PCCP may have their programs suspended by the MGC Branch and shall:

1. Discontinue the use of the "USDA Process Control Certification Program" Shield.
2. Only process products in accordance with MGC Instruction 640.
3. Bear all expenses incurred in providing certification services in accordance with MGC Instruction 640.
4. Adjust production schedules to coincide with availability of MGC Branch staff.

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Commodity Further Processing Worksheet - Front										Date:		Applicant:													
Starting Commodity Information																		4	4						
Line No.	State	%	Contract Number	Commodity Code	Est. No.	Lot No.	Case Wt.	Case Count by Pallet								Totals		Rework Added							
								1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Cases	Pounds	Prod Code	Date	Units	Pounds				
Line No.	State	%	Non-Donated Meat Added			Interim Product Made			Remarks																
			Sup. Est. #	Date	Pounds	Units	Pounds	ID																	
									Day Shift Grader												EQC				
									Night Shift Grader												EQC				

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USDA-AMS LIVESTOCK AND SEED PROGRAM		<b>USDA DONATED MEAT PRODUCT PRODUCTION INFORMATION</b>						SERIAL NO.		/	/		
DATE (week beginning)		RECIPIENT STATE	PLANT NAME				LOCATION				APPLICANT NO.		
Date of Production	Receiver (Recipient agency, state)		Starting Cases	Starting Pounds of Donated Product	Non-Donated Added Meat (pounds)	End Item		Boxes	Ending Pounds	Product Code/ CN Label	Yield	EPDS Yield	
Pounds of Product (Rework) included from Previous Production			Pounds of Rework Generated	Loss other than Normal production Loss (include reason for loss)									
CERTIFICATE NUMBER(S)							EQ CODE		SIGNATURE				

# PROCESS CONTROL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Plant Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Est. No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Shift: \_\_\_\_\_

Grader Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Line: \_\_\_\_\_

PCCP PLAN	CERTIFICATION CHECKS	TIME MONITORED (Minimum Once/Shift)	TIME MONITORED	TIME VERIFIED (Minimum Frequency)	TIME VERIFIED	TIME VERIFIED	TIME VERIFIED	TIME VERIFIED	TIME VERIFIED	TIME VERIFIED	TIME VERIFIED	TIME VERIFIED	TIME VERIFIED
B.	<b>DFPA</b>												
	Contract/EPDS			Start-up									
	Amendments/Waivers			Start-up									
C.	<b>Traceability</b>												
	Product Tracking			1 / Shift									
D.	<b>Equipment</b>												
	Scales			1 / Shift									
	Grinders & Blenders			1 / Shift									
	Thermometers			1 / Shift									
	Metal Detection			3 / Shift									
E.	<b>Raw Materials</b>												
	Condition Examination			1 / Hour									
F.	<b>Formulation</b>												
	Case Count/Weight			1 / Hour									
	Dry Ingredients			2 / Shift									
	Liquid Ingredients			2 / Shift									
G.	<b>Batter/Breading</b>			2 / Shift									
H.	<b>Product Temperature</b>												
	Raw			3 / Shift									
	Cooked			3 / Shift									
	Frozen			3 / Shift									
I.	<b>Portion Weights</b>			2 / Shift									
J.	<b>Product Defects</b>			2 / Shift									
K.	<b>Case Net Weights</b>			2 / Shift									
L.	<b>Packaging &amp; Labeling</b>			2 / Shift									
M.	<b>Production Records</b>			1 / Shift									
N.	<b>Rework</b>			1 / Shift									
O.	<b>Storage/Shipment</b>			1 / Shift									

Comments:



Monitor = Observe Examination  
Verify = Check Written Records

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USDA-AMS LIVESTOCK AND SEED PROGRAM		<b>USDA DONATED MEAT PRODUCT PRODUCTION INFORMATION</b>						SERIAL NO.		/	/	
DATE (week beginning)		RECIPIENT STATE	PLANT NAME			LOCATION			APPLICANT NO.			
Date of Production	Receiver (Recipient agency, state)		Starting Cases	Starting Pounds of Donated Product	Non-Donated Added Meat (pounds)	End Item		Boxes	Ending Pounds	Product Code/ CN Label	Yield	EPDS Yield
Pounds of Product (Rework) included from Previous Production			Pounds of Rework Generated	Loss other than Normal production Loss (include reason for loss)								
CERTIFICATE NUMBER(S)							EQ CODE		SIGNATURE			